

STATE SENATOR • HANSEN CLARKE • 1ST DISTRICT

Clarke Press Release

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SENATOR CLARKE: PASSAGE OF CIGARETTE TAX INCREASE WILL SAVE THOUSANDS FROM LOSING THEIR MEDICAID COVERAGE

LANSING- While stating that he wished there were an alternative funding source, State Senator Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit) stated that today's action by the Michigan Senate to raise the cigarette tax by seventy-five cents will come as welcome relief to over 40,000 citizens who were scheduled to lose their Medicaid coverage, as of October 1st.

"While I would have preferred to find an alternative funding source, today's vote will prevent nearly 45,000 of Michigan's most vulnerable citizens from losing their Medicaid coverage," said Sen. Clarke. "Decisive action was necessary to ensure that our state's underprivileged children, disabled and the elderly receive the basic medical attention that they need."

Senator Clarke stated that approximately 20,000 of those who would have lost their Medicaid coverage are from Wayne County. The Detroit Democrat also indicated that today's action is good news for the financially troubled Detroit Medical Center because it means the state will not be reducing payments to Medicaid service providers.

"I'm pleased that we have prevented an estimated 20,000 area citizens from losing their health care coverage," said Sen. Clarke. "I'm also relieved that our local hospitals will not be forced to

make a choice between remaining financially solvent and providing medical care for our local poor.”

The cigarette tax increase legislation has been sent back to the Michigan House of Representatives. The House is expected to non-concur with the Senate action leaving it to a joint conference committee to iron out a final agreement.

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